

UNIFIED AREA COMMAND PRESS BRIEFING

Moderator: LT Commander Robert Wyman
May 27, 2010
4:30 p.m. CT

Operator: Good afternoon, my name is Ryan and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the press briefing Deep Water Horizon BP Oil Spill Response Current Operation Update. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. After these speakers' remarks, there will be a question-and-answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your questions, press the pound key. Please note that today's call is being recorded. Thank you.

I would now like to turn the call over to Lieutenant Commander Rob Wyman. Sir, you may begin your conference.

Rob Wyman: Thank you and good afternoon everybody. I'm the Chief of the Joint Information Center here at the Unified Area Command in Robert Louisiana. Thank you for attending.

With us today is Rear Admiral Mary Landry – L-A-N-D-R-Y, the federal on-scene coordinator. We also have Mr. Doug Suttles – S-U-T-T-L-E-S, BP's Chief Operating Officer. We have Mr. Mike Prendergast – P-R-E-N-D-E-R-G-A-S-T, the Mineral Management Services Chief of Staff for the Gulf of Mexico Region.

We'll begin today with opening remarks and then we'll take questions from members in the audience and at that time, we'll open up the phone lines for those who dialed in.

If you would, please silence your cell phones or turn them off. If you would, raise your hand, wait to be called upon, we'll bring you a microphone since we're capturing the audio for today's conference. Please provide your name and affiliation before asking a question and we will try to allow some time for follow ups. Thank you.

Mary Landry: Good afternoon, everyone. Yesterday – yesterday the top kill operations commenced and Mr. Suttles from BP is going to give you some updates on how that's going. Before that, I'd like to give you a little background. Yesterday some of you asked if we were going to get information about the estimated flow from the release from this well and we actually, as the National Incident Commander reported, Admiral Thad Allen, the flow rate technical group has determined the overall estimate potentially flowing from the well is at a range of 12,000 to 19,000 barrels per day is what could have been emanating from this well and this is an estimate, but it's a very rigorously reviewed estimate, which means we could have anywhere from 18.6 million to 29 million gallons have estimated to have been spilled from this incident.

The focus of this group from day one has been to prepare to – for a worse-case scenario, to fight this as far offshore as possible, obviously focus on securing on a source, and then if oil hits the shoreline, to be ready to respond to that shoreline.

So we've been involved in this for over 30 days obviously and we have had pretty good success fighting this offshore I would say. We do have over 101 miles of shoreline impacted in Louisiana, but right now we're focused on about 30 miles that are able to be cleaned actually. Some of that is beach area, which is obviously easier to clean. Some of it is marsh, which you have to work through very carefully and we are very involved in that. We have nine areas where workers are out there today and we will get reports at the end of the day, but so far, very good efforts on the shoreline.

We have also – there's been some discussion and I've read where folks think you know the military should be involved in this. I want to reemphasize again, from day one, every federal agency is involved, the coast guard is a

military service and a federal law enforcement agency and we respond to oil spills. But what's so important is to recognize the great work of the National Guard. They not only serve overseas with the department of defense but Secretary Gates purposely made national guard available to the governors of the Gulf Coast states and we've had over 1,000 national guard from Louisiana, Mississippi, we've had 63, Alabama 312, Florida six thus far, but all of these national guard are authorized to have up to 17,000 national guard troops if we needed them to respond to this fight. So we thank the efforts of the National Guard certainly serving under their governors and we also thank Secretary Gates for his support.

We not only have National Guard troops, but we have every agency involved at the federal level, state level, local communities, volunteers, you know the vessel of opportunity skimming system with the – that BP-hired shrimpers who are out of work to be able to work on this and so it's been an all-hands-on-deck effort and let's not forget the private sector, the commercial people that have been trained and our staff to respond to these spills. So it's an all-hands-on-deck effort.

As you all know, the heat and humidity in Louisiana can be challenging and we did have an incident yesterday where we had seven people that were hospitalized with various symptoms, headaches, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath.

We've had changes. We've had safety officers as part of this response and we've also had members of OSHA and BP's safety officers as well as the Coast Guard's industrial hygienists and safety officers. So we are basically – these folks have all had the proper personal protective equipment on, they'd all received the required training to do this response and fortunately everyone is fine.

We – what we will do is examine and conduct an investigation to make sure what we can do to ensure that these workers are all working in safe conditions.

There is extensive air monitoring, water sampling and work being done by both the state and the EPA, so we will continue to monitor this situation very carefully so that nobody is put in harm's way as they respond to this spill.

Finally, I want to mention extensive work that we've done on logistics, I call it logistics support, a response of this magnitude. Certainly we have seen the active work by over 1300 vessels but we now have reached a crescendo of more than a million feet of boom has been mobilized to this site and the boom keeps coming in.

We've had over 100,000 feet arise just today for Louisiana alone and we continue to ramp up as much as we need, but boom isn't the only thing that'll fight the spill and some of these marsh areas with the tides the way they are and as fast as the current flows, boom isn't always going to be the answer. However we work very hard to boom off these areas as much as possible, use sorbents and other means. We have shallow water skimmers, near shore skimmers, we have skimming going on offshore and there's a tremendous amount of resources down here to fight this fight.

We have used dispersants, I know that people are very concerned about the volume of dispersants. The EPA and the Coast Guard actually requested that we reduce it to as much as possible and issue a directive to BP. We have not had to apply surface dispersants recently and are using Sub C injection as we go through this top kill procedure, it's very important to be able to minimize any hazardous conditions on the surface with oil coming up from the well.

I think I'll stop there and let Doug give you an update on top kill because you're probably very eager to hear about that and then we're obviously available for any questions you might have. No, you – I'm sorry.

Mike Prendergast: It's all right. Thank you, Admiral Landry.

Good afternoon, I'm Mike Prendergast, I serve as Chief of Staff for the Gulf of Mexico region. As Chief of Staff for the Gulf of Mexico region (inaudible). I'm here today on behalf of (Lawrence Hope) (MMS) Gulf of Mexico regional director. (Lars) is in the Houston Infinite Command Center

all this week and he has been there with other MMS engineers who continue to provide oversight on the development of the methods and procedures necessary to secure the well. This week they are witnessing and participating through MMS's regulatory role in the well diagnostic test, in the top kill procedure from the command center.

Potential situations that could arise the implementation of the top kill moves forward must be anticipated, analyzed and accounted for before MMS approves the go-ahead for any of these procedures. By being onsite and providing key input to the technical procedures the BP engineering team has assembled, MMS can assure that all reviews are being done as thoroughly and quickly as possible. Every process that has taken place in preparation for the well bore injection diagnostic test and the top kill operation required MMS review and Unified Command approval here in Robert. These two operations alone involved at least 16 procedures.

Let me emphasize that MMS top priority from day one has been and continues to be to stop the flow of oil to the sea floor and to ensure that multiple alternative procedures are identified and pursued to accomplish this. We continue to work along with BP and Unified Command other options which include the lower marine, riser package cap and the (blau) preventer, on topical oil preventer option as well.

MMS is continuing to work with the Coast Guard also on the joint investigation. In fact a second series of public meetings on this began yesterday morning. The focus of our joint investigation is determine the cause of this incident and identify what steps must be taken to ensure that this – a similar incident does not occur again. Thank you.

Doug?

Doug Suttles: Thank you. To provide an update on our activities over the last 24 hours or so, I'll start with where we ended last night. So we began the top kill procedures at about 1:00 in the afternoon yesterday and we pumped an extensive amount of drilling mud and followed by some monitoring of the well, we reinitiated a second round of pumping and drilling mud late

yesterday evening and continued that to just before midnight where we stopped pumping operations. We then suspended activities overnight while we monitored the well, evaluated the results of our activities so far and restocked the vessels for additional top kill activity.

So over the last 16 hours or so, we've been assessing the first – results from the first portion of our top kill efforts. We restocked the vessels that were offshore and we've developed the next phase of the top kill operation. We should begin pumping operations sometime a little later this evening. These operations will likely include the use of some form of bridging materials and could use our jump shot capability which is deployed on the seabed.

Should stress as we did last night that this operation continues, it's proceeding according to the plan that we put in place and it will likely continue on for at least another 24 hours.

If successful with the top kill operation, the final phase will be following the pumping of mud and other materials with cement. And as has already been mentioned, if the operation is unsuccessful, we will immediately move to the application of the lower marine riser package cap, LMRP cap, as we described previously. And we also continue to work another option to close in the flow which is the blowout preventer on top of blowout preventer just previously mentioned.

Our other activities continue as Admiral Landry's already discussed. We continue to make very good progress offshore, partly due to exceptional weather that continues and has been good for more than a week now. We've also had the incident with the seven individuals the admiral's mentioned. I should just stress though that not only do we have the required training and personal protective equipment that's required for this job, we also do extensive monitoring for what are called VOCs or volatile organic compounds, in other words, the gasses which come from the oil.

And to date, that sampling activity which is both done onshore and on these vessels of opportunity has yet to show any volatile organics appearing. But the investigation the admiral described is ongoing. We want to determine the

cause of these symptoms and actually make sure we respond to them accordingly.

Our other activity offshore was successful yesterday. We had seven burns. We also skimmed just short of 8,000 barrels of oily water. But these numbers continue to be relatively low compared to previous numbers due to the fact that the volume of oil on the surface is much lower than it has been in the past.

We've also made changes, as I think we referred to last night to our operating structure to improve our response to oil coming ashore. We've broken our operating division out of (homa) into three units. To increase their effectiveness, we brought in additional staff that's both BP and the Coast Guard to provide additional field leadership. And as the Admiral's already mentioned, just in the last 24 hours or so, we've moved an additional 100,000 feet of boom to the state of Louisiana.

So with that, I'll be happy to stop and take your questions.

Ben Nuckols: Ben Nuckols with the Associated Press. You said you stopped pumping the mud for the past 16 hours. Was that part of the plan originally or is that a sign that something went wrong or something unanticipated happened?

Doug Suttles: No, nothing's actually gone wrong or unanticipated. When we do this operation which is sometimes referred to as a dynamic kill, so if I describe it again it's basically injecting drilling mud or heavy fluids at very high rate to overcome the flow. At times, what you have to do is pump in the fluid, you're monitoring and particularly the pressures of that operation.

And based on that pressure data you determine whether you're – you believe you're overcoming the flow or if you need to take additional steps and those steps could actually be pump at higher rates. Those steps could be actually pumping heavier fluids or lighter fluids or they could involve pumping this bridging material and even using the (junk) shot.

So I would characterize what we've done so far as part of the plan. We've intentionally, if you recall, installed a lot of monitoring equipment, gauges for

instance, to be able to monitor activity. And so we did the initial pumping, we monitored that, we stopped, we monitored the well, then we restarted pumping and now we believe the next step is we've restocked additional drilling mud, about another 15,000 barrels we brought offshore today. And later on this evening we'll restart – and we expect to use some of the bridging material and we may use the (junk) shot as well.

Ben Nuckols: Did the initial pumping overcome the flow?

Doug Suttles: It's award to be certain. We obviously – we believe we did pump some mud down the well bore. We obviously pumped a lot of mud out the end of the riser, that was very visible from watching the plume, but we haven't yet completed the operation and that'll be done when the well stops flowing and can no longer flow to surface and that's when we'll know we've had success with this phase.

Female: Hi. So are you – (inaudible). Are you – now that (inaudible) you optimistic about the process or I mean I know it's going along according to plan, but (inaudible)?

Doug Suttles: Well, we've clearly been at this for quite some time now and I think as myself and everyone who's been involved in this, it's quite a roller coaster. Every time we start a new operation we obviously believe it could be successful. We obviously want it to be successful, but we actually understand where we stand today, which is the well continues to flow.

I would actually say I believe this can work. The analysis would suggest it would work, but until we've completed the job and until the well is no longer flowing it's difficult to be optimistic or pessimistic. I really think the right approach here is to say that we've got to execute the plan, finish the operation and see what the results are. And then I'd stress, if it isn't successful, we already have the equipment staged, it's on the seabed and ready to go for the next phase.

Female: And the (inaudible)?

Doug Suttles: As of this morning, we were around \$850 million. That includes the money that BP spent and the money the federal government spent which I think, as a responsible party here, will be reimbursing, but I think the total is right at around 850 million so far.

Alan Johnson: Yes, Alan Johnson for Agence France Presse. There's been a lot of anxiety about the chemical dispersants and Admiral Landry, you've talked about keeping the fight offshore. There's reports today of a large plume undersea moving towards Mobile Bay. What can you tell us about the biologists that were consulted, who were they – who were the biologists that BP consulted for the chemical disbursement? And what is the – I mean, there's a lot of anxiety about putting pollutants on top of pollution.

Doug Suttles: Well, I think you know probably two things to answer there. I think the first piece which is about the use of dispersants. You know the Corexit product is one that's on the EPA approved list and there's been extensive study of that study by many groups and the EPA included. So the product we're using with approval by the federal launching coordinator and the EPA and others has been this Corexit product. I think that everyone should recognize we've only done that with approval by the appropriate government parties. We have not – I want to stress this – we have not ignored in any way the things we've been directed to do. I think that we need to make sure that's very clear.

The product works. Dispersion is working. Clearly there's concern. We've been asked to do three additional things on – with dispersants. Number one is continue to look for alternatives. I just reviewed that again today with the team and we're very close. There's an additional 11 products we're looking at and we're working through that and hopefully in the next 48 hours or so we'll get that to conclusion. And as I've stated many times, if there's a less toxic, more effective product we'll switch to it. Without a doubt. We won't even have to be ordered to do that, we'll do it voluntarily.

The second thing is to do additional study literature reviews to see if there are any additional material which tell us about the long term effects. We have yet to find that. But we continue that.

And the last point we were instructed to do was to minimize the use and the Admiral's already spoken to that. The volumes are down considerably and a lot of that is due to the fact that not only are dispersant use but burning and skimming in particular have been very effective at reducing the amount of oil on the surface, therefore we don't need to use as much of either. So we're going to follow those three things that we've been directed to do and we will do those three things.

Mary Landry: Can I also add, though, it's very important to know some extensive monitoring is taking place. We did three subsurface tests before we even began subsurface injection. We also did a smart – there's a smart protocol that is ongoing for the surface dispersant.

So I think it's important to understand how much the – how much care and time is taken and how much transparency the – the information is being provided to everyone that were getting very good data from the use of disbursements.

But more importantly, when you start to talk about plumes, I think if I could just assure everyone that not only NOAA and the EPA, but many agencies are being brought together and there is going to be extensive science. We have three areas particularly that we're very focused on right now. First of all, it's the safety of seafood and seafood sampling so that we can open up fisheries. The National Marine Fishery Services closed some fisheries until we can – as a caution to make sure we can test and see what impact this oil spill has had on the fisheries. The state of Louisiana has done the same thing, these are vital fisheries both for commercial and recreational fisheries.

The other point is NOAA vessels coming to really study the impact that all this activity has had on this wonderful ecosystem and to make sure we continue to study and provide information to everyone about what the impact of this oil has had, what the impact disbursements have had on this important marine ecosystem.

And then finally, the constant air and water quality monitoring that we must do while you're engaged in operations with a volatile and you know a high heat index everything. So we're doing that as well.

Alan Johnson: Can we address this specific question about Mobile Bay and about the ...

Mary Landry: It's my understanding there were two vessels, one that the fishing vessel (Weather Bird II) is on a – it's a Florida vessel contracted by NOAA that's returning from its mission tomorrow so we're going to be able to look at the results and work with them collaboratively to analyze whatever information they found, and then we know there's also the Gordon Gunter the ship that's departing past Pascagoula. So those are just two, we have several other research vessels that are coming and I know NOAA is doing its own – or BP, excuse me, is doing its own research. So there's going to be extensive research and analysis of what's going on and that will be shared with everyone.

Male: If I can add just one more point. In fact, the data from our monitoring program is actually on the internet. You can go look at the results from that data. I think you'll actually see that in three specific areas. I think the first five monitoring trips from the monitoring vessel are posted. First thing is is that the oil and water measurements are very low. They're measured in parts per billion – oil in parts per billion.

The second is the toxicity is well within EPA limits and the oxygen levels are also well within EPA limits.

But that data's being shared transparently and actually, there's a good deal of cooperation going on between all of the parties involved here and there'll be considerably more data coming in very soon as the Admiral's already mentioned.

(David Magna): (David Magna) from CNN. Will the injection of this bridging material or the junk shot, result in that plume diminishing or disappearing?

Doug Suttles: The purpose of using a bridging material, the junk shot, is to ensure that the mud we're injecting into the well goes down the well bore as opposed to out

to the end of the riser. So that's its purpose. I think it's going to be very, very difficult as you watch the activity take place to know the success just from the short term pictures of the plume itself.

What you saw yesterday for instance is that large amounts of the drilling mud came out the end of the riser and actually that's what obscures the visibility, it's the solids and the drilling mud. But ultimately if the bridging material and the junk shot do their purpose, it will divert more of the mud down the well bore so that it stops the flow and less of the fluid escapes out the end of the riser. That's its purpose.

Greg Bluestein: Greg Bluestein, Associated Press. Earlier — you mentioned this earlier, you said that there would be a 24-hour window (inaudible)? Is there any timeline (inaudible) top four technically? What can you say about reports that too much of the boom fluid was escaping from the (inaudible)?

Doug Suttles: Yes, on the first one, I – if you recall, I actually said 24 hours or it may take longer, based on operational requirements and I'll stress that again, we might finish this in the next 24 hours or it may take longer because we're going to do the job as best we can. We're going to take the time it requires to do it and if that takes more than 24 hours then it'll take more than 24 hours.

What we will do is continue to update you as we do the work. And I can assure you if we're successful in stopping the flow, once we're convinced that has occurred, you will all know quite quickly, probably from the roar that comes out of this building, I suspect.

The second part of the question, actually the amount of fluid coming out of the riser and the visual observation, very very difficult to interpret that, as I said, because the drilling mud has a lot of solid materials in it, that's what actually makes it a lot – what you think of as almost sediment, that's what makes it heavy. And therefore, it makes it quite cloudy and the currents down there, they're not strong, but they do move back and forth. So at times what they do is they flow back on to the remote vehicles, the robotic submarines with their cameras, and that's what obscures it. But today we think that the

visual observations aren't showing any new leak points or leak sources at this point.

Male: We have time for maybe two or three more questions from the audience.

Louis Sahagun: Louis Sahagun, with the L.A. Times. I don't mean to belabor this, but yesterday you said that about this – by this time today you would know whether it was successful or not. I'm wondering if you plan now to inject cement by the end of (inaudible)? And in fact, at what point will you know? It sounds like it's become more difficult than perhaps you thought it would be yesterday?

Doug Suttles: I can appreciate why you'd think that. But actually, with this type of operation, what we're trying to establish is make sure we get this heavy drilling mud to go down the well bore so that it stops the flow of the well. And when we planned this job we recognize that that could have difficulties because we have this riser going the opposite direction.

So are we surprised that the job is taking this long? No, not particularly. Are we at any point saying we're finished with this operation? We're not doing that as well. The fact that it's taken more than 24 hours is not a big surprise. In fact, I think as many people have pointed out numerous times, some of the things we've done have taken longer than we thought, largely because it's hard to do things in 5,000 feet of water on the seabed.

I can tell you one thing that's gone very well with the job so far is the equipment itself has performed according to plan. Both the equipment on the surface and the equipment on the seabed, that element of the job has gone very well, but we'll stay at this until either we're successful or we've determined we can't be successful with this technique.

Male: You had a follow up?

Ben Nuckols: Last question. Can you put any kind of – sorry, Ben Nuckols with AP again. Can you put any kind of likelihood on the prospect of doing the junk shot, do you know how likely it is that you'll do it?.

Doug Suttles: Actually, hey, I wouldn't want to say that. What we've done at this point is working with people like the MMS. And Secretary Chu is actually in our operations center in Houston as part of this job as well. And when we go to the pumping phase, we turn over operational control to the experts in the field on the vessels who are doing their job and they have a number of tools available to them, including materials that can pump from the surface or use the junk shot. That's been carefully analyzed today. And based on what they see occurring with the pumping pressures, they'll determine right then whether it's the appropriate next step. But that's all been very, very carefully analyzed with MMS and others, the best minds we can get, to make sure it's the appropriate next step.

Male: Operator, at this time please open the line to callers.

Operator: OK, your first question comes from Jessica Resnick with Bloomberg.

Jessica Resnick: Hi. Thank you for taking my call. Mr. Suttles, I'm curious, as I look at the process you described for us in terms of what happened last night with pausing putting in the drilling mud so you could see what the effects were. When do you next expect to take a pause like that? Can you walk us through what you expect to do in the next 24 to 48 hours because obviously there were certain parts of the planned activities that I didn't understand as clearly as one might have liked to after yesterday's press conference?

Doug Suttles: Yes, happy to do that.

Jessica Resnick: Thanks.

Doug Suttles: So what we'll be doing next is initiating the pumping operations and I think that will actually occur quite soon. And as part of those pumping operations, we will use bridging material of some form as I've described. We will actually – while we're doing the pumping, what we're actually monitoring is the pressures and those pressures tell us whether we think we're achieving the killing operation we're trying to do, whether we're actually inhibiting the flow from the well and how effective we are. At some point then at – operation what you do is stop pumping and you monitor the well to see what the pressures does. If the pressure begins to rise, then you start pumping gain, or

you think about your next step. If it doesn't rise it's an indication that you're having success with the operation.

We'll continue to do that as long as we think that we can be successful with the job. So we have a lot of capability offshore, we have three different vessels we can pump from, we have a large volume of mud and we can replenish that at a regular basis and we'll continue do that as long as we believe this technique could be successful and that could be done over the next 24 hours, or it could take longer.

Once we believe we've stopped the flow with the pumping of mud, we'll follow that with cement and that cement then should prevent the well from following again, and then after that, at some point, we'll cap this particular well with some device until such time as the relief well actually gets to the bottom (whole) location and we able to pump cement into the well bore at the bottom.

Male: Next question.

(Jessica Resnick): Thank you.

Operator: Your next question comes from(Tim Dickinson with Rolling Stone Magazine.

Tim Dickinson: I had a quick question about the mud itself. Is that an organic mud or is it some sort of synthetic? And then secondarily the estimates of the flow that BP has been putting out for weeks now have been inaccurate and as Congressman Markey pointed out yesterday, at variance even with BP's internal documents.

So I just wonder if you have an apology to the American people for misleading them?

Doug Suttles: On your first question about the makeup of the mud, this is a water-based – it's a non toxic material. As we talked about yesterday, it's really made up of two main ingredients, one is a material called (baryte) which gives it weight, and the second is viscosifiers, which give it a certain viscosity. But if you wanted more details, I'm sure we can provide those.

As to the results of the FRTG, I think since the very beginning the rate number which we've talked about here at Unified Command has been 5000 barrels a day. We've always said it was highly uncertain and that – but that was a number we had as Unified command. What we have done inside of BP and transmitted to the Coast Guard and to others is we continue – been looking at our estimates and the rate we've done that.

I think the piece you're referring to is we showed a piece of analysis which our work show that it can be as low as 1000 barrels a day and as high as 14,000 barrels a day. But it's always been highly uncertain, so I don't believe in any time we have misled anyone on this. We've been quite open about it. The flow's been monitored since the very beginning across this operation, both here and Robert and Houston and elsewhere across the country by government officials and we've been open with our analysis results.

But we've always stated, I think, two things, one is it's very, very difficult to know what the number is, and I think you even see with the FRTG report the wide range that they're reporting. And the second thing we've always stressed is it has not changed our response, and in fact, I think Admiral Allen spoke to that earlier today, it is not the basis for sizing the response. It may have implications to other things, but it hasn't been about this response.

Male: Next question.

Operator: Your next question comes from David Farenthold with The Washington Post.

David Farenthold: Sorry, I'm wondering about – you talked about how you were going to observe the flow. You were going to pump in the mid and then observe the flow and then take lessons away from what you saw. From what you see now, do you think that the two first attempts at a top kill made any difference? Is it better in any way now than it was before you started?

Doug Suttles: You know that's a – that's what – a question that a lot of people both inside BP, industry experts and members of the government have been looking at

quite carefully for the last 16 hours and I think some people believe it has, some believe it's less obvious it has because the main way you can do that is by the visual observation of the plume and we've just talked about how difficult that is to do. I think what we do know is we have not yet stopped the flow. So the operation hasn't yet achieved its objective. What we do believe we've done is successfully pumped some of this drilling mud into the well bore, but clearly we need to pump more of that in and that's why we're making some changes to the operation for its next phase.

Male: Next question.

Operator: Your next question comes from Jaquetta White with the Times Picayune.

Jaquetta White: Hi. Thanks for taking my question. I wanted to double check that there has been no pumping today and also if you can explain why we're still seeing mud come out of the riser if that's the case? And then also, do you know how much mud has been pumped so far and if there's any indication of what percentage is going in and what percentage is escaping? And then finally, if you can explain what's in the bridging agents? Is it separate from the makeup of the junk shot?

Doug Suttles: The first part of your question which was asking about what we're observing, we have not pumped today as of the start of this press conference, we have not yet pumped any, but I think the last – the pumping ended somewhere around 11:00 pm, I don't have the precise time, but around 11:00 pm last night.

What you're seeing come out of the riser is a combination of some drilling mud and then of course the oil and gas that's been coming out before. I don't know precisely what mix, but we clearly pumped a lot of mud into the well and some of that is flowing back. But it's very, very difficult to know that.

As far as percentages, we don't know. We do know a large volume of mud came out the end of the riser that was very visible during the operation and actually we have a lot of that sediment around the equipment and it clearly obstructed the visibility.

I've already forgotten the last question.

Male: Bridging.

Doug Suttles: Bridging, the makeup of the bridging agent. These things are everything from the kind of materials used in the junk shot that we've talked about before to also other plating materials. So what we – we have a – the industry has a wide range of materials to use from very, very small in diameter and fibrous to very large things like rubber balls, very dense rubber balls to plug things up. We have the entire range available to us and it's the experts on the job who will be determining in what order to pump these based on what they believe is occurring in the well.

Male: Next question.

Operator: Your next question comes from Angel Gonzalez with Dow Jones.

Angel Gonzalez: Hi, I just wanted to make – to reconfirm that the – what we see in the image right now is mud or this combination of materials flowing back from the well. It seems to me that – I mean the high pressure – the sort of jets of material that we're seeing are coming out at a really high pressure from the well bore. Is that correct? Because if you haven't been pumping today that pressure must come down from the earth, right?

Doug Suttles: Yes, the flow coming out – if you recall, we've had – for several weeks now we've had the flow coming out from two locations, one's the very end of the riser, what many people refer to as the plume, but it's the larger amount, the majority of the flow comes out at that point. And then at the – at what's called the riser bed, which is right at the top of the well, right at the top of the blowout preventer and its associated equipment and there's four specific spots in that bend where fluid is exiting. That fluid right now, it will be a combination of oil and gas and some drilling mud undoubtedly. It's hard to know precisely how much is coming out of that, but that's what's occurring.

The pressures that it's coming out at we don't believe are any different than they've always been and it is the pressures from down within the well bore is what's pushing all of this oil and gas and anything else that's coming up with it out.

Male: Operator, we have time for two more questions.

Operator: Your next question comes from Carol Rosenberg with The Miami Herald newspaper.

Carol Rosenberg: Thank you for taking the call. Sir, ma'am, when Admiral Allen tell us that the mud was suppressing the hydrocarbons – hydrocarbons, does that mean it was slowing the rate of the oil and gas leak? And are you telling us you ran out of mud, is that what happened?

Doug Suttles: No. Well, the first part of your question is actually during the job we clearly did, while we were pumping, we clearly had suppressed the amount of oil and gas coming out. But what we have to be able to do is suppress it to the point it won't restart flowing. So clearly during the pumping operation, we were suppressing the amount of oil and gas coming out and if that's what Admiral Allen said, that's actually exactly what occurred.

The – but that operation until such time as we've (got) the well so it can no longer flow to surface it isn't complete. So that's what we must do to finish the job.

Carol Rosenberg: And did you run out of mud?

Doug Suttles: No, we didn't run out of mud. Someone asked earlier and I don't believe I ever got back to it – how much did we pump in total. I don't have the exact figure, I think it was somewhere less than 15,000 barrels. We have a total of about – we had a total about 50 – five zero, thousand barrels available to us, it was in different quantities, but of course before we go to the next pumping operation, we want to make sure we have sufficient volume to finish the next pumping phase. So while we were analyzing what we did, we've restocked these vessels so we had the full complement for the next phase.

(Carol Rosenberg): Thank you.

Male: Last question, please.

Operator: Your final question comes from Paula Dittrick with the Oil and Gas Journal.

Paula Dittrick: Hi. Thanks for taking my question. I wondered if you could tell me about the – at what rate the mud is being pumped in? I know there was mention before of how much horsepower you had.

Doug Suttles: Yes, the – once again I'd just stress that the equipment has worked very, very well since the beginning. We pumped at rates as high as almost 70 barrels a minute, between 65 and 70 barrels per minute which is a very, very high rate and we still have that capability, but we've also gone to very, very low rates as well as we've worked on the job. And so the – I think the point to stress here is the equipment we've brought to the location and we have triple redundancy in this operation is working very well.

Male: Thank you. That concludes today's press conference, the transcripts from this will be available online at the website deepwaterhorizonsresponse.com.

END